Healthy Canada

Health and Welfare Canada | Santé et Bien-être social Canada

1992

USING THE Food Guide

Canada

Includes Pull-out section of
CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING.

WHAT IS CANADA'S *Food Guide* TO HEALTHY EATING?

IT IS A GUIDE to help you make wise food choices. The rainbow side of the Food Guide places foods into 4 groups: Grain Products, Vegetables and Fruit, Milk Products, Meat and Alternatives. It also tells you about the **kinds of foods** to choose for healthy eating.

The bar side of the Food Guide helps you decide **how much** you need from each group every day. It shows you serving sizes for different foods.

The bar side of the Food Guide tells you how 'other foods' that are not part of the 4 food groups can have a role in healthy eating. Because some of these 'other foods' are higher in fat or Calories, the Food Guide recommends using these foods in moderation.

The Food Guide suggests a way of eating for people over the age of 4.

This booklet explains how to best use **Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.** It will help you make food choices for healthier eating every day.

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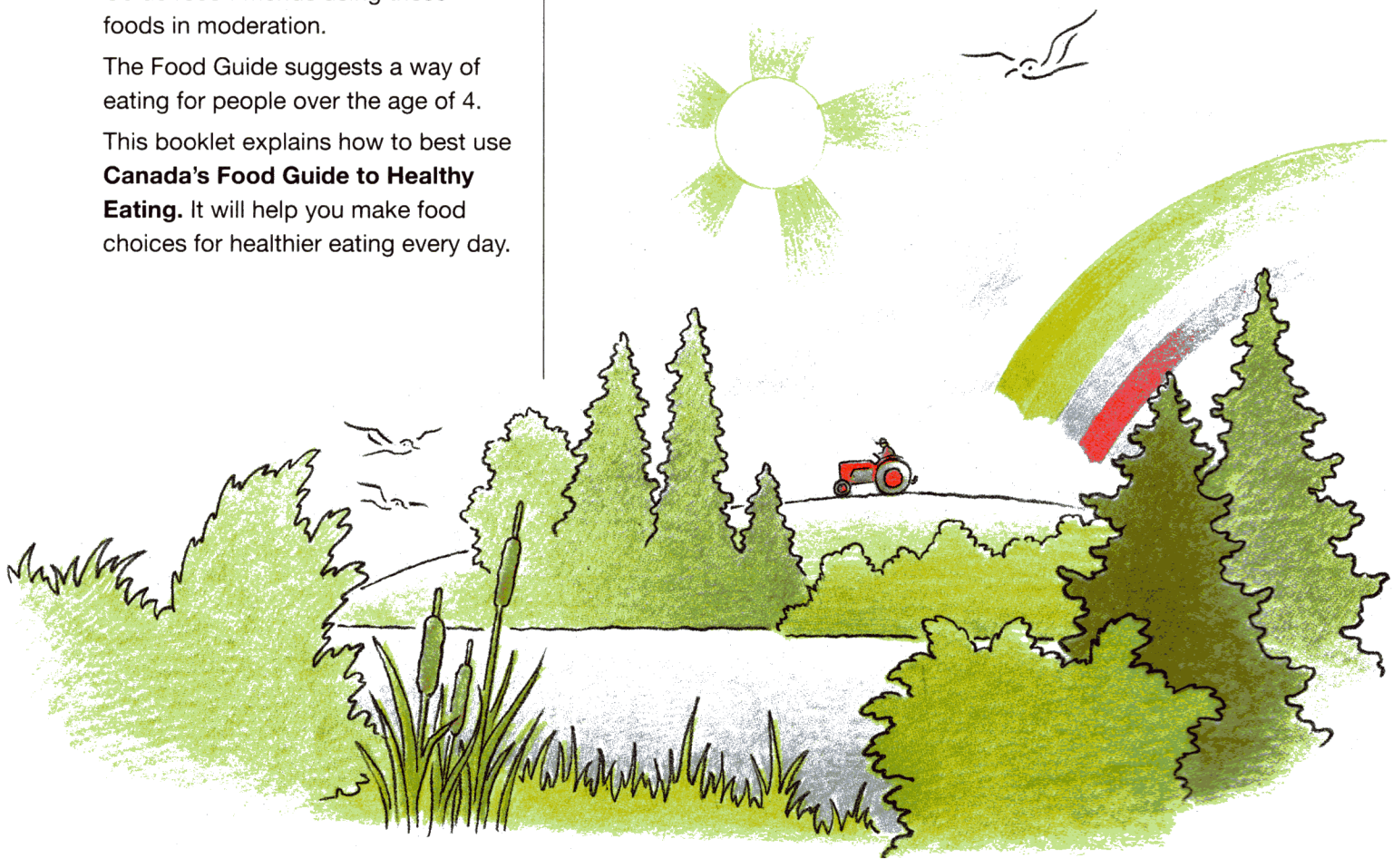


What is the Food Guide based on?

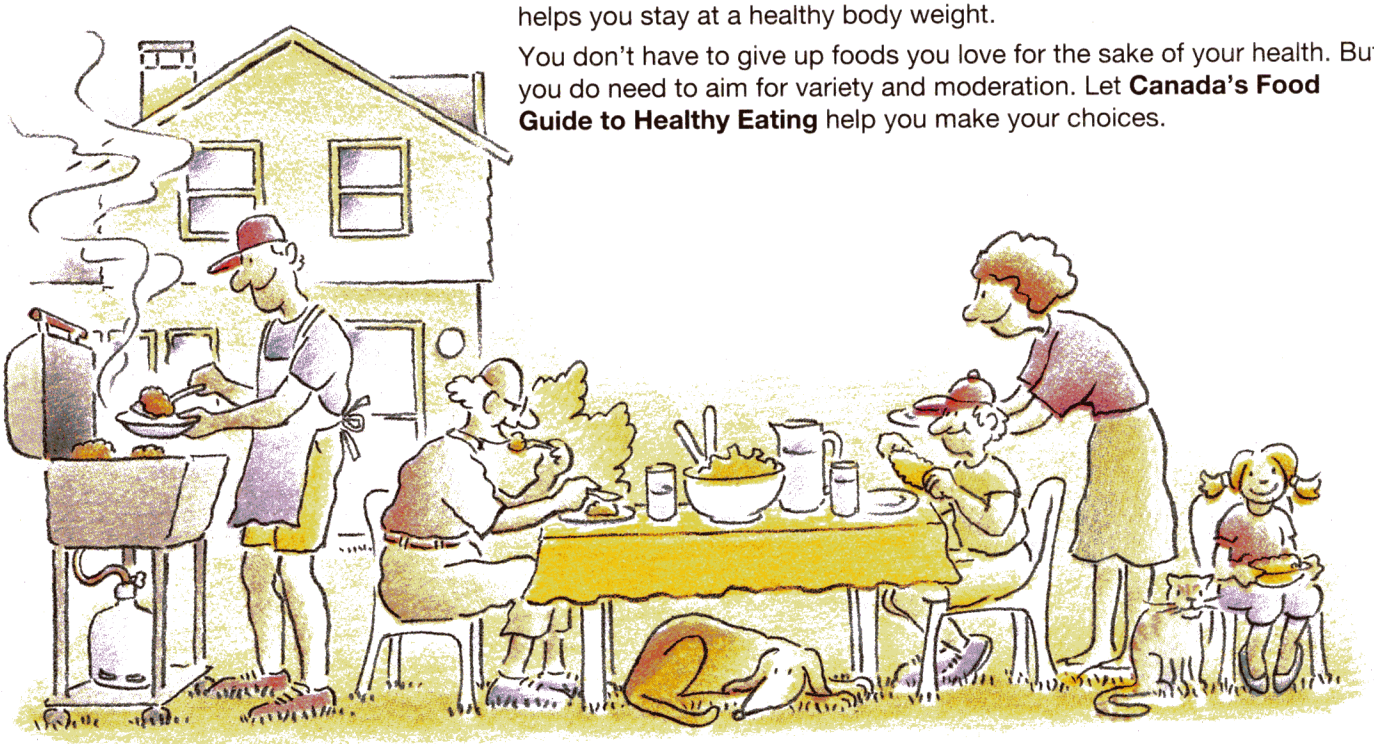
Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating is based on these guidelines from Health and Welfare Canada:

Canada's Guidelines for Healthy Eating

1. Enjoy a VARIETY of foods.
2. Emphasize cereals, breads, other grain products, vegetables and fruit.
3. Choose lower-fat dairy products, leaner meats and foods prepared with little or no fat.
4. Achieve and maintain a healthy body weight by enjoying regular physical activity and healthy eating.
5. Limit salt, alcohol and caffeine.

Eating is one of the best things life has to offer. Food helps you celebrate with your family and friends. It nourishes your body. It gives you energy to get through each day. The right balance of food and activity helps you stay at a healthy body weight.

You don't have to give up foods you love for the sake of your health. But you do need to aim for variety and moderation. Let **Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating** help you make your choices.



What does the Food Guide tell you?

The rainbow side of the Food Guide gives you advice on how to choose foods.

'Enjoy a variety of foods from each group every day.'

Try something new! Explore the rainbow of foods that make up the 4 food groups. Enjoy foods with different tastes, textures and colours.

The 4 food groups provide you with the nutrients you need to be healthy. You need foods from each group because each group gives you different nutrients. You also need to choose different foods from **within** each food group to get all the nutrients your body needs. Look at the chart on the opposite page for the key nutrients each food group offers.

'Choose lower-fat foods more often.'

Everyone needs some fat in their diet, but most people eat too much fat. Eating more breads, cereals, grains, vegetables, fruit, peas, beans and lentils will help you cut down on fat. You can also choose lower-fat dairy products and leaner meats, poultry and fish.

Each of the 4 food groups includes foods that contain fat. Eat lower-fat foods from each group every day. Choose smaller amounts of higher-fat foods. If you do, you'll be able to enjoy the foods you love and eat well at the same time.

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CANADA'S
Food Guide
TO HEALTHY EATING
Enjoy a variety of foods from each group every day.
Choose lower-fat foods more often.
Choose whole grain and enriched products more often.
Choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often.
Choose lower-fat milk products more often.
Choose leaner meats, poultry and fish, as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often.
EVAP MILK
POWDER
2%

Tips to Reduce Fat

- Spread less butter or margarine on bread, buns or bagels.
- Have salads with less dressing or with a lower-fat dressing.
- Try vegetables without butter, margarine or rich sauces.
- Try skim, partly-skim or reduced-fat milk products in recipes.
- Choose meat, poultry or fish that are baked, broiled or microwaved. Serve with light broth or herbs.
- Have fried or deep-fried foods less often.
- Have snacks such as chips and chocolate bars less often.

'Choose whole grain and enriched products more often.'

Whole grain products such as whole wheat, oats, barley or rye are suggested because they are high in starch and fibre. Enriched foods are recommended because they have some vitamins and minerals added back to them. Treat yourself to multi-grain breads, pumpernickel bagels, enriched pasta, brown rice, ready-to-eat bran cereals or oatmeal.

'Choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often.'

These foods are higher than other vegetables and fruit in certain key nutrients like vitamin A and folacin. Go for salads, broccoli, spinach, squash, sweet potatoes, carrots, cantaloupes or orange juice.

'Choose lower-fat milk products more often.'

Lower-fat milk products have less fat and Calories, yet still provide the high quality protein and calcium essential to healthy eating. Whether it's milk, yogourt, cheese or milk powder, choose the lower-fat option. Look at labels and choose products with a lower % M.F. (Milk Fat) or % B.F. (Butter Fat). Then you can have the refreshing taste of milk products with less fat.

'Choose leaner meats, poultry, and fish, as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often.'

Many leaner meats, poultry, fish and seafood choices are available to help you reduce your fat intake without losing important nutrients. Be sure to trim visible fat. Try baking, broiling, roasting or microwaving instead of frying, and drain off extra fat after cooking. To lower your fat while increasing your intake of starch and fibre, choose foods like baked beans, split pea soup or lentil casserole.

Key Nutrients in Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating

Each food group is essential. That's because it provides its own set of nutrients.

Grain Products	+ Vegetables & Fruit	+ Milk Products	+ Meat & Alternatives	= The Food Guide
protein		protein	protein	protein
		fat	fat	fat
carbohydrate	carbohydrate			carbohydrate
fibre	fibre			fibre
thiamin	thiamin		thiamin	thiamin
riboflavin		riboflavin	riboflavin	riboflavin
niacin			niacin	niacin
folacin	folacin		folacin	folacin
		vitamin B_{12}	vitamin B_{12}	vitamin B_{12}
	vitamin C			vitamin C
	vitamin A	vitamin A		vitamin A
		vitamin D		vitamin D
		calcium		calcium
iron	iron		iron	iron
zinc		zinc	zinc	zinc
magnesium	magnesium	magnesium	magnesium	magnesium

What does the Food Guide tell you?

The bar side of the Food Guide shows you the serving sizes for different foods. It also explains that different people need different amounts of food.

What are 'Other Foods'?

'Other Foods' are foods and beverages that are **not part of any food group.**

They include:

- foods that are mostly fats and oils such as butter, margarine, cooking oils and lard
- foods that are mostly sugar such as jam, honey, syrup and candies
- high-fat and/or high-salt snack foods such as chips (potato, corn, etc.) or pretzels
- beverages such as water, tea, coffee, alcohol and soft drinks
- herbs, spices and condiments such as pickles, mustard and ketchup.

These foods can be used in making meals and snacks and are often eaten with foods from the 4 food groups.

CANADA'S
Food Guide
TO HEALTHY EATING
FOR PEOPLE FOUR YEARS AND OVER
Different People Need Different Amounts of Food
The amount of food you need every day from the 4 food groups and other foods depends on your age, body size, activity level, whether you are male or female and if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. That's why the Food Guide gives a lower and higher number of servings for each food group. For example, young children can choose the lower number of servings, while male teenagers can go to the higher number. Most other people can choose servings somewhere in between.
Grain Products
5-12
SERVINGS PER DAY
1 Serving
2 Servings
Vegetables & Fruit
5-10
SERVINGS PER DAY
Milk Products
Meat & Alternatives
2-3
SERVINGS PER DAY
Other Foods
Taste and enjoyment can also come from other foods and beverages that are not part of the 4 food groups. Some of these foods are higher in fat or Calories, so use these foods in moderation.
Enjoy eating well, being active and feeling good about yourself. That's VITALITY

More About 'Other Foods'

Water

- Always satisfy your thirst. Choose water often and be sure to drink more in hot weather or when you are very active.

Alcohol

- For most adults, moderate drinking means no more than 1 drink a day and no more than 7 drinks a week. More than 4 drinks on one occasion, or more than 14 drinks a week is a risk to health and safety.
  1 drink = 1 bottle (or about 350 mL) of beer
  1 drink = 150 mL (or about 5 oz) of wine
  1 drink = 50 mL (or about 1 1/2 oz) of liquor
- If you are pregnant or breast-feeding, avoid alcohol.

Caffeine

- Use in moderation. Caffeine is found in drinks such as coffee, tea or colas and foods that contain cocoa. It's also in drugs such as cold remedies and headache medicine.

Pull-out the next 4 pages and keep them handy.

How many servings from each food group do I need?

Too many servings?

It may seem like a lot, so check to see how many you really need. And, you may be eating more servings than you realize. For example, a plate of pasta can count as 3-4 servings of Grain Products and a juice box as 2 servings of Vegetables and Fruit.

Because different people need different amounts of food, the bar side of the Food Guide suggests the following number of servings:

Grain Products
5-12
SERVINGS PER DAY

Vegetables & Fruit
5-10
SERVINGS PER DAY

Milk Products
2-4
SERVINGS PER DAY
Children 4–9 years: 2–3 servings/day
Youth 10–16 years: 3–4 servings/day
Adults: 2–4 servings/day
Pregnant & Breast-feeding Women: 3–4 servings/day

Meat & Alternatives
2-3
SERVINGS PER DAY

The number of servings you need every day from the 4 food groups and other foods depends on your age, body size, activity level, whether you are male or female and if you are pregnant or breast-feeding.

Most people will need to have more than the lower number of servings, especially pregnant and breast-feeding women, male teenagers and highly active people.

Different People Need Different Amounts of Food

Here are some examples of how people could choose their servings in one day.

FOOD PRODUCTS	MARIE	SERVINGS	DAVID	SERVINGS	LOUISE	SERVINGS
Grain Products	Marie is **5 years** old. To meet her nutrient and energy needs, Marie has the smallest number of servings from each food group and adds 'other foods'. As she grows or is more active, Marie may choose more servings.	5	David is **17** and a competitive swimmer. To meet his nutrient and energy needs, David chooses the largest number of servings from each of the 4 food groups and adds 'other foods'. David has higher energy needs than most people and at times he may need to choose **even more** servings than those shown here.	12	Louise is **35** and not very active. Like most people, she eats different amounts of food from day to day to satisfy her nutrient and energy needs. As her appetite and activity level change, Louise may adjust the number of servings and amount of 'other foods' she eats.	6
Vegetables & Fruit		5		10		7
Milk Products		2		4		2
Meat & Alternatives		2		3		2
'Other Foods'						

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CANADA'S

Food Guide

TO HEALTHY EATING

Enjoy a variety of foods from each group every day.

Choose lower-fat foods more often.

Grain Products
Choose whole grain and enriched products more often.

Vegetables & Fruit
Choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often.

Milk Products
Choose lower-fat milk products more often.

Meat & Alternatives
Choose leaner meats, poultry and fish, as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often.

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CANADA'S

Food Guide

TO HEALTHY EATING

FOR PEOPLE FOUR YEARS AND OVER

Different People Need Different Amounts of Food

The amount of food you need every day from the 4 food groups and other foods depends on your age, body size, activity level, whether you are male or female and if you are pregnant or breast-feeding. That's why the Food Guide gives a lower and higher number of servings for each food group. For example, young children can choose the lower number of servings, while male teenagers can go to the higher number. Most other people can choose servings somewhere in between.

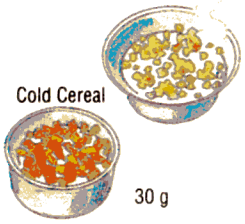
Grain Products

5–12

SERVINGS PER DAY

1 Serving

1 Slice



Cold Cereal

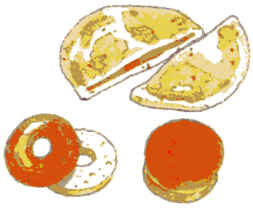
30 g

Hot Cereal

175 mL

3/4 cup

2 Servings



1 Bagel, Pita or Bun

Pasta or Rice

250 mL

1 cup

Vegetables & Fruit

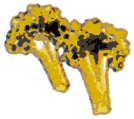
5–10

SERVINGS PER DAY

1 Serving

1 Medium Size Vegetable or Fruit

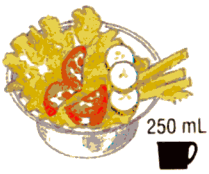
Fresh, Frozen or Canned Vegetables or Fruit



125 mL

1/2 cup

Salad



250 mL

1 cup

Juice

125 mL

1/2 cup

Milk Products

SERVINGS PER DAY

Children 4–9 years: 2–3
Youth 10–16 years: 3–4
Adults: 2–4
Pregnant & Breast-feeding Women: 3–4

1 Serving

250 mL

1 cup

3"x1"x1"

50 g

Cheese

2 Slices

50 g

175 g

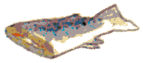
3/4 cup

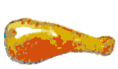
Meat & Alternatives

2–3

SERVINGS PER DAY

1 Serving





Meat, Poultry or Fish

50-100 g

Fish

1/3–2/3 Can

50–100 g

1-2 Eggs

Beans

125-250 mL

100 g

1/3 cup

Peanut Butter

30 mL 2 tbsp

Other Foods

Taste and enjoyment can also come from other foods and beverages that are not part of the 4 food groups. Some of these foods are higher in fat or Calories, so use these foods in moderation.

Enjoy eating well, being active and feeling good about yourself. That's VITALITÉ

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Your Healthy Eating Scorecard

What are serving sizes?

The bar side of the Food Guide explains serving sizes for different foods. For example, in Grain Products, 1 slice of bread = 1 serving, while 1 bagel, pita or bun = 2 servings.

The size of servings can vary within the Meat & Alternatives group. For example, 50-100 grams (g) of meat, poultry or fish = 1 serving. That way, a child may choose a smaller portion size while an adult may choose a larger portion size to get 1 serving.

The Food Guide uses both metric and household measures. That's because you usually buy or prepare foods using either of these measures.

Check off your food choices in the boxes below as you eat them throughout the day. On the bar side of the Food Guide you'll see what makes up 1 serving from each food group. If you like, make copies of this chart and use it over a longer period of time to check your progress.

FOODS

Grain Products

Vegetables & Fruit

Milk Products

Meat & Alternatives

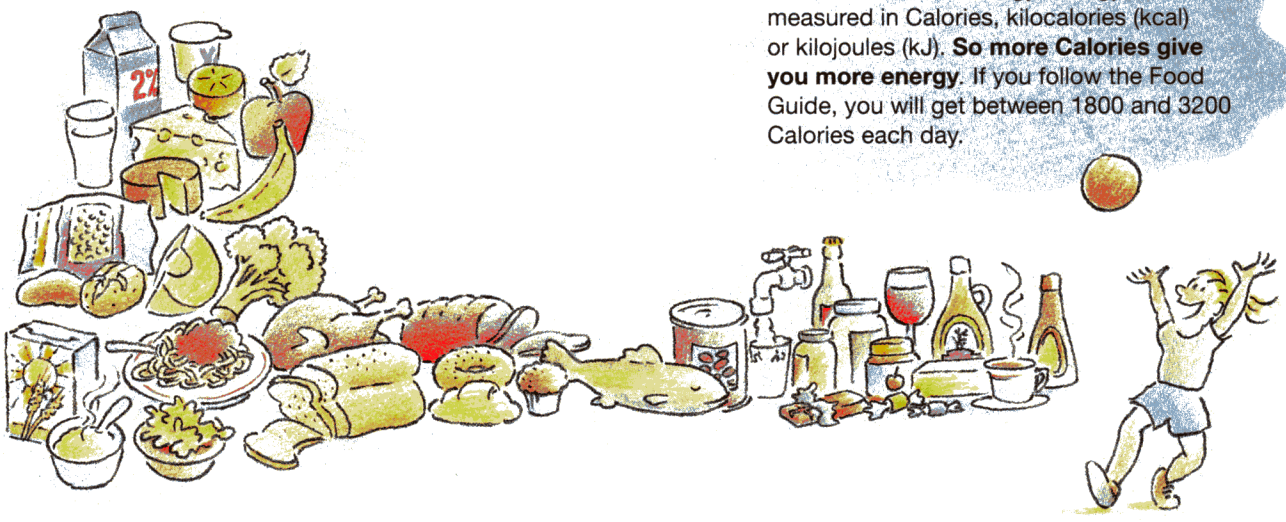
Other Foods *(list on the line below)*

_____

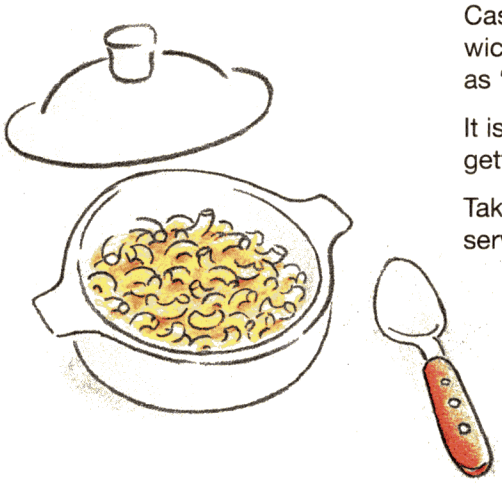
If you don't eat a lot, it's important to choose your food wisely. For example, women should choose foods high in iron such as beef or game meat, whole grain and enriched cereals, peas, beans and lentils. Let the statements on the rainbow side of the Food Guide help you make your choices. People who choose the lower number of servings but are still hungry or losing weight may need more servings from the 4 food groups and other foods.

Energy = Calories

You need food for energy. Energy is measured in Calories, kilocalories (kcal) or kilojoules (kJ). **So more Calories give you more energy**. If you follow the Food Guide, you will get between 1800 and 3200 Calories each day.



What about Combination Foods?

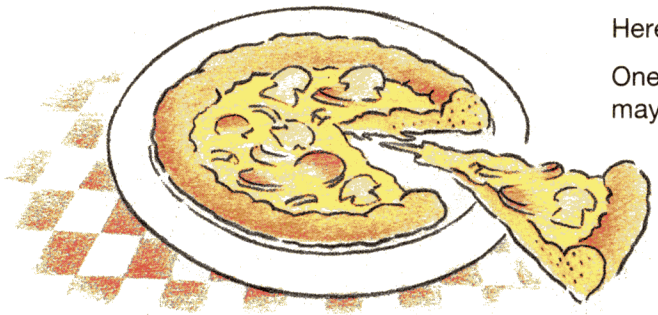


We often eat meals which have more than one kind of food in them. Casseroles, chili, moussaka, pizza, spaghetti, soups, stew and sandwiches are made from the foods of more than one food group as well as 'other foods'. These are called combination foods.

It is hard to know how many servings of each food group you are getting in foods of this kind.

Take ***Tuna Noodle Casserole,*** for example. One 500 mL (2 cup) serving may contain:

- 2 servings of Grain Products (250 mL or 1 cup of pasta)
- 1 serving of Meat & Alternatives (50 g or 1/3 can of tuna)
- 1/2 serving of Milk Products (125 mL or 1/2 cup of milk in white sauce)
- 1 serving of Vegetables & Fruit (125 mL or 1/2 cup of peas, celery and onions)
- 1 'other food' (5 mL or 1 tsp. butter or margarine in white sauce)



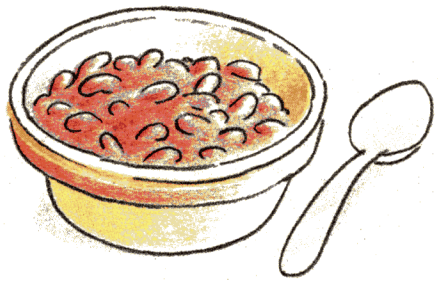
Here are 2 more examples:

One whole small (20 cm/8") ***Ham, Pineapple and Cheese Pizza*** may provide:

- 3 servings Grain Products (20 cm or 8" crust)
- 1 serving Vegetables & Fruit (50 mL or 1/4 cup of pineapple and 50 mL or 1/4 cup of tomato sauce)
- 1 serving Milk Products (50 g or 2 oz. of cheese)
- 1 serving Meat & Alternatives (50 g or 2 oz. of ham)

One large 400 mL (1 3/4 cup) serving of ***Chili Con Carne*** may contain:

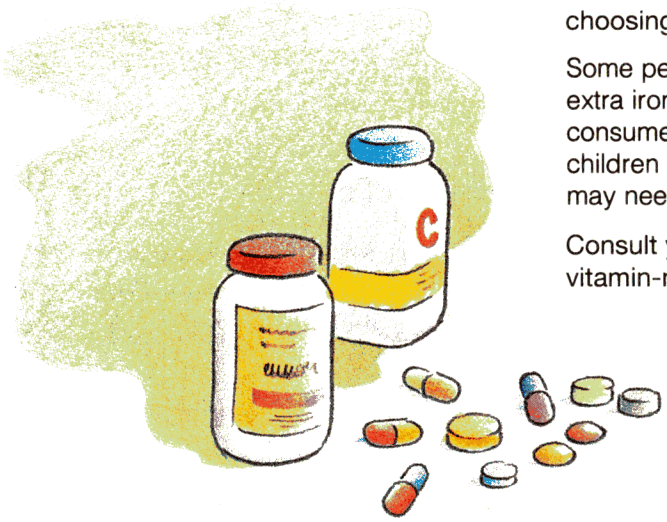
- 2 servings of Vegetables & Fruit (125 mL or 1/2 cup of tomato sauce and 125 mL or 1/2 cup of green peppers, onions and mushrooms)
- 2 servings of Meat & Alternatives (125 mL or 1/2 cup of kidney beans and 50 g or 2 oz. of ground beef)



To figure out the number of servings of each food group you have eaten in your combination foods:

1. List the main food items.
2. Estimate how much of each food item you ate.
3. Look at the bar side of the Food Guide to see roughly how many servings each food item provides.

What about Vitamin and Mineral Supplements?



A multiple vitamin-mineral supplement can **not** replace good eating habits. You usually get all the nutrients your body needs by simply choosing a variety of foods from all 4 food groups and 'other foods'.

Some people need certain supplements. Pregnant women often need extra iron and folacin. Elderly people who don't get any sun and don't consume margarine or enough milk may need extra Vitamin D. Some children three years and older living in areas without fluoridated water may need fluoride supplements.

Consult your doctor or dietitian if you think you need to take a vitamin-mineral supplement.

WHERE DOES SALT FIT IN?

Most salt we eat comes from sodium chloride–better known as table salt. Most people get more than they need, so it's best to limit sodium and salt.

Tips on how to cut down on salt:

- Eat fewer highly salted snack foods.
- When shopping, check the labels. Choose foods that are unsalted and lower in salt or sodium.
- Use less salt at the table and when cooking.
- Taste foods before adding salt.
- Instead of salt, use spices, herbs or lemon juice.

Ways to use the Food Guide

This is your Food Guide. Use it to make wise food choices **wherever you are.**

AT HOME

Keep the Food Guide in a handy place such as on your fridge. It will remind you which foods to eat more often. Make meals and snacks that are packed with nutrients, lower in fat and higher in starch and fibre. Use the Food Guide to prepare your shopping list. It can help you make smarter food choices.

SHOPPING

Choose foods from the 4 food groups first. Be sure to check food labels when you shop. Labels can tell you about the ingredients and nutrients found in foods. To help you decide, ingredients are listed by weight, from most to least.

EATING OUT

When you are eating out, choose carefully. Look for places that offer a variety of lower-fat choices from each of the 4 food groups with lots of grain products, vegetables and fruit. If you always choose fried foods, creamy sauces and rich desserts, you may be getting too much fat. Go for moderation. Whether it's eating on the run or a special evening out, enjoy your favourite restaurant foods and choose wisely by following the Food Guide.

Putting it all together

ENJOY:

- **Eating Well**
- **Being Active**
- **Feeling Good About Yourself**

Eating well is just one way to get the most out of life. It's also important to be active and feel good about yourself.

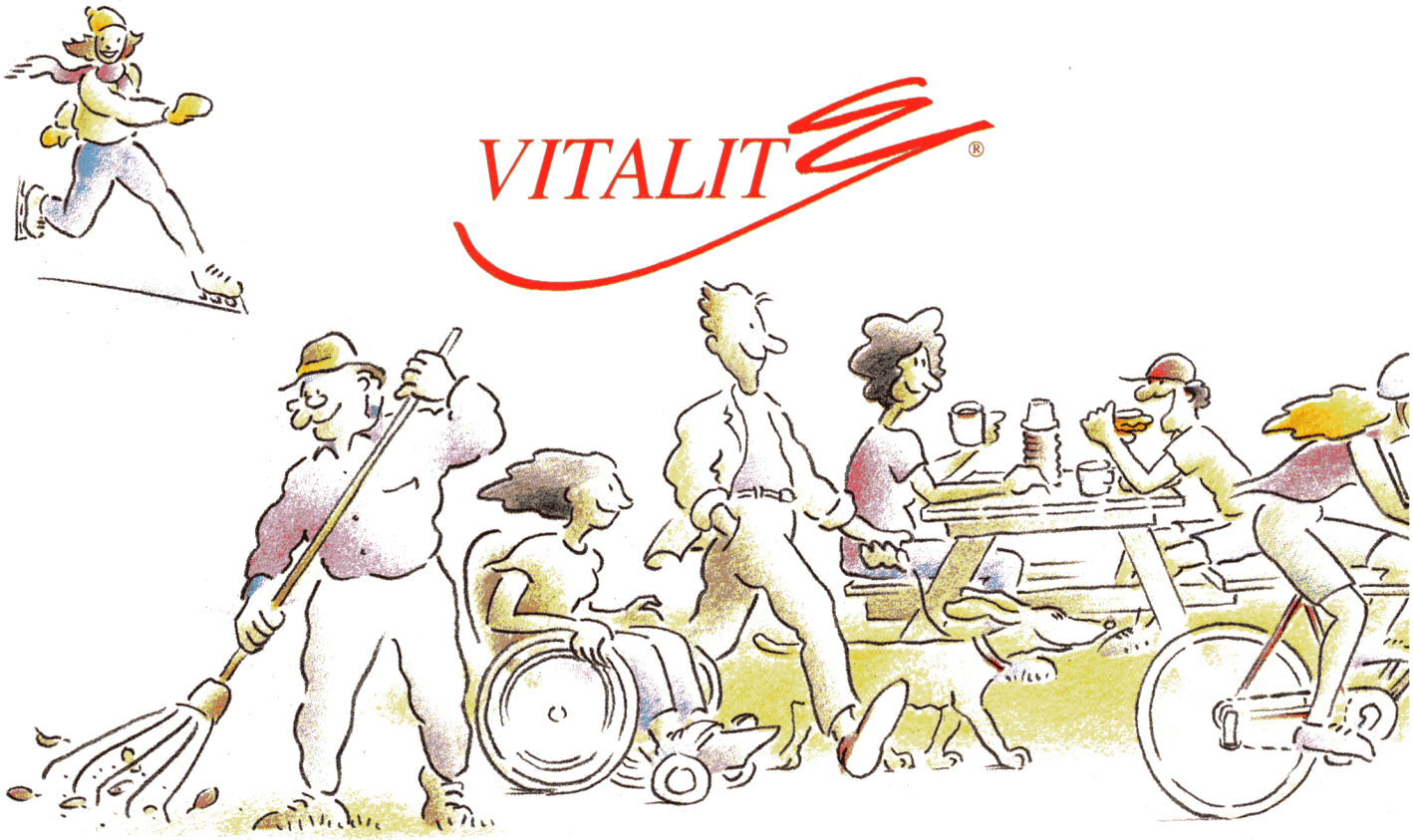
Eating well means following **Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.** Use the ideas in this booklet to help you make wiser food choices. After all, food is one of life's great pleasures.

Being active means making physical activity a part of your everyday life. It helps you manage your weight and strengthen your heart, lungs and muscles. Find fun ways to be active in your own way. Walk part of the way to and from work. Head outdoors to skate, swim or hike. Play ball with the kids.

Feeling good about yourself means believing in yourself. The best way to do that is to accept who you are and how you look. So treat yourself well.

Healthy bodies come in a variety of shapes and sizes. A good weight is a healthy weight, not just a low weight. A healthy weight helps you stay active and lowers the risk of health problems.

Take a fresh approach to living. Enjoying eating well, being active and feeling good about yourself. That's Vitality!



Healthy Eating Checklist

After reading this booklet, ask yourself: will I choose...

- ☐ a variety of foods from each of the 4 food groups?
- ☐ foods within the suggested number of servings for all 4 food groups?
- ☐ whole grain and enriched grain products more often?
- ☐ dark green and orange vegetables and orange fruit more often?
- ☐ lower-fat milk products more often?
- ☐ leaner meats, poultry and fish, as well as peas, beans and lentils more often?
- ☐ 'other foods' wisely?
- ☐ foods prepared with little or no fat?
- ☐ to enjoy eating with my family and friends regularly?
- ☐ to be active every day?

Want to know more?

To find out about healthy eating for yourself and your family, you can contact:

- Your local or community health office. They can also put you in touch with other nutritionists and nutrition agencies in your area.
- Dietitians and nutritionists who work in health centres, hospitals, universities, community colleges and people in the food industry in your community.
- Your provincial Department of Health.

For additional copies of **Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating** and this brochure, contact:

Or contact:

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